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DE RUEHKO #0461 0320604
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 010604Z FEB 07
FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0263

UNCLAS TOKYO 000461

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: JAPAN'S RESPONSE: CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION
(CWC) - SEEKING SUPPORT TO BLOCK IRAN BECOMING EXECUTIVE
COUNCIL CHAIR

REF: SECSTATE 11293

1. On February 1, ESToff delivered reftel demarche to Principal Deputy Director Nobuharu Imanishi and Officer Masamichi Ito in MOFA's Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions Division. Imanishi said that he would share the demarche with other officials for interagency coordination. He reported that the Government of Japan discussed Iran's candidacy for EC Chair and considered the possibility of Japan seeking the position. At this time, however, no decision has been made. Imanishi pointed out that unlike the U.S. who has two Ambassadors, Japan only has one. It may be a major time constraint for Japan to take on EC Chair responsibilities in addition to other ambassadorial roles. He also felt strongly that it should not appear that names are being put forward simply to provide an alternative to the Iranian candidate. Imanishi said that such a scenario could create bad feelings that might cause the elected Chairperson to lose credibility after the election. Imanishi did not offer names for possible alternative candidates.

2. At the conclusion of the meeting, ESToff informed MOFA counterparts that Embassy Tokyo will follow-up next week.
SCHIEFFER